

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06
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R 200821Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY BONN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6885
INFO AMEMBASSY WARSAW
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY LONDON
USMISSION USNATO

C O N F I D E N T I A L BONN 04970

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PEPR, PL, GW
SUBJECT: FRG VIEWS ON POLISH INTERNAL SITUATION

1. THE FOREIGN OFFICE BELIEVES GIEREK'S POSITION HAS STRENGTHENED IN RECENT MONTHS AND THAT HE RETAINS THE SUPPORT OF BOTH THE SOVIET UNION AND THE CHURCH.

2. DURING HIS MARCH 14 AND 15 CONSULTATIONS IN BONN, AMBASSADOR SCHAUFLE ASKED FOREIGN OFFICE OFFICIALS FOR THEIR VIEWS ON THE POLISH INTERNAL SITUATION. AFTER MAKING THE APPROPRIATE CAVEATS ABOUT PAUCITY OF INFORMATION AND THE UNPREDICTABILITY OF EVENTS IN POLAND, THE OFFICIALS OFFERED THE FOLLOWING ANALYSIS: GIEREK'S POSITION HAS STRENGTHENED IN RECENT MONTHS AND IS NOW MORE STABLE THAN WAS THE CASE IN LATE 1976 OR 1977. HIS IMPROVED RELATIONS WITH THE CHURCH HAVE BEEN AN IMPORTANT FACTOR IN THIS REGARD. BOTH THE CHURCH AND THE SOVIETS APPARENTLY CONSIDER HIM THE BEST AVAILABLE PARTNER AND INDEED THERE SEEMS TO BE
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NO ALTERNATIVE CANDIDATE AT THE MOMENT. BREZHNEV, WITH WHOM GIEREK IS SAID TO ENJOY A GOOD RELATIONSHIP, WILL CONTINUE TO SUPPORT THE POLISH LEADER'S BALANCING ACT SINCE A SUCCESSOR MIGHT ADOPT A MORE REPRESSIVE POLICY WHICH COULD UPSET THE APPLE CART.

3. THE FOREIGN OFFICE BELIEVES THAT THE DISSIDENTS

DO NOT, AT THIS TIME, POSE A THREAT TO GIEREK. THEIR
ACTIVITY IS CONFINED TO INTELLECTUAL
CIRCLES AND THEY HAVE BEEN UNSUCCESSFUL IN WINNING
SUPPORT AMONG WORKERS AND FARMERS. AT THE SAME TIME
GIEREK FACES SERIOUS ECONOMIC PROBLEMS WHICH COULD
WELL EVOLVE INTO SOCIAL AND EVENTUALLY POLITICAL
PROBLEMS. THERE IS A LATENT INSTABILITY IN POLAND
ATTRIBUTABLE (IN THE GERMAN VIEW) IN LARGE PART TO
THE DIFFICULTY OF GOVERNING THE POLES. POLAND WILL,
FOR EXAMPLE, ALSO BE INHERENTLY LESS STABLE THAN
CZECHOSLOVAKIA OR HUNGARY.

4. THE FOREIGN OFFICE FINDS IT DIFFICULT TO JUDGE
WHETHER GIEREK IS MOVING TOWARD A DECENTRALIZATION
OF THE POLISH ECONOMY. ON BALANCE, IT APPEARS THAT
HE IS IN FACT ENGAGING IN A HOLDING OPERATION AND
PUTTING OFF HARD DECISIONS ON THE ECONOMY.
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